

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 866

By Favors

A RESOLUTION to welcome the 73rd Annual Celebration of the Tennessee State Association of Elks Convention to Chattanooga.

WHEREAS, it is fitting that the members of this General Assembly should specially recognize those exemplary clubs and organizations that are composed of concerned citizens who are dedicated to improving the quality of life in their respective communities; and

WHEREAS, one such estimable organization that evinces the greatest integrity and probity in all its endeavors is the Tennessee State Association of Elks, which is holding its 73rd Annual Convention in Chattanooga from April 27 through May 1, 2018; and

WHEREAS, Brother Leslie Jones, PGER and State President, and Daughter E. Yvonne Joyce, PGDR and Daughter State President, will preside over the Celebration in accordance with its theme for 2018: "A New Beginning, Pressing Forward To Serve Better"; and

WHEREAS, the Improved Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks of the World, or the Elks, is the largest predominantly African-American fraternal organization in the world and has a membership of more than 450,000, with Lodges and Temples in the United States, Canada, Mexico, Cuba, the West Indies, the Virgin Islands, Panama, Alaska, and the Bahamas; and

WHEREAS, in June 1899, the first charter and articles of incorporation for the organization were granted; its first Lodge, Alpha Lodge No. 1, was organized in Cincinnati, Ohio, as the result of the efforts of Arthur James Riggs and Benjamin Franklin Howard; and

WHEREAS, on June 13, 1902, in Norfolk, Virginia, Emma Virginia Kelly organized the Daughters of Elks, which was later adopted by the Grand Lodge and became an auxiliary body to the Brothers; and

WHEREAS, the purpose of the Elks organization is: "That the welfare and happiness of its members be promoted and enhanced; the nobleness of soul and goodness of heart be cultivated so that the principles of Charity, Justice, Brotherly and Sisterly Love be inculcated; that its members and families be assisted and protected; and that the spirit of patriotism be enlivened and exalted"; and

WHEREAS, in its long and arduous mission to combat racism and improve the lives of African Americans across the nation, the I.B.P.O.E. of W. organization has utilized many worthy programs and initiatives, including the Grand Lodge Athletic Department to develop and preserve the physical symmetry of the Manhood and Womanhood of the Order; the Youth Department to provide education, recreation, and training for youth; the C.L. and Blanche Smith Image Awards Program to offer financial assistance for technical training for young adults; the Medical Department to promote health awareness issues and develop medical programs to provide care for people of color; the Education Department to provide scholarships to thousands of students and fight illiteracy; the Computer/Leadership Camp Program to provide a wholesome environment for inner city students to learn leadership and computer skills; the Karen L. Wilson Memorial Scholarship Fund to provide financial assistance to students seeking certified vocational/technical training; the Civil Liberties Department to help fight segregation in public places, to ensure freedom for all people, and to oppose today's "de facto segregation"; the Antlered Guard Department, the "Showcase of Elkdom," to provide youth a forum to display their drill and marching abilities; and many others; and

WHEREAS, the members of this laudable organization are wholly committed to the noble precepts of public service that have earned Tennessee recognition as the Volunteer State; as an ambassador of those very precepts, the Tennessee State Association of Elks should be recognized on this special occasion; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED TENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we welcome the 73rd Annual Celebration of the Tennessee State

Association of Elks Convention to Chattanooga, commend the Tennessee Elks on their exemplary service to their communities, this State, and our nation, and wish them much continued success in their future endeavors.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copy of this resolution be prepared for presentation with this final clause omitted from such copy.